

Dear all!

Welcome to Stavanger.

A very special welcome to all new students from abroad! I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for choosing Stavanger for your studies. You have come to a city and a region where openness and diversity are highly valued. Out of a population of 144,000, more than 20 percent have their origin in another country than Norway. Almost all nationalities in the world are represented in Stavanger. That is a great strength to the city of Stavanger. I wish you all the best of luck with your studies and in Stavanger.

To those of you who come from other parts of the country: welcome to our region and welcome to a university that we are very proud of.

Last week, news emerged that made a big impression on most of us.

The new report from the UN Climate Panel seriously emphasizes what can happen if the world fails to limit greenhouse gas emissions. But there is hope. The report points out that rapid international action will keep the worst consequences at bay. This means that we need new knowledge and new experts in many disciplines. This expert could be YOU. The situation truly emphasizes the value of education.

Many of you have experienced challenging times in the past year or so, both in terms of school and socially. Due to the pandemic, the start of the academic year will undoubtedly be different than we had hoped for. But the light in the tunnel is getting brighter, and I hope and believe that we will soon return to a normal life again.

I know what it's like to be a new student in a new city. I remember very well my first day as a law student in Bergen. There was a lot of uncertainty and expectations, but I remember that it was really helpful to meet others in the same situation.

Student life is really something – a “here and now” moment that will never return. Enjoy it and seize the opportunities that arise along the way, both professionally – and not least socially.

You have come to the country's fourth largest city and third largest urban region – to the country's energy capital, to the city of culture and the city of knowledge. Distances are short in this region, from city to country, from sea to mountains, and with a vibrant cultural life and nightlife.

You make our streets come alive.

Get out there and make use of the city and all the great things we have to offer!

And finally – there is a national election coming up. Remember to exercise your right to vote.

Good luck with your studies and with the future!